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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/RSP/TC AND OES/IHA

STATE PLEASE PASS TO AIT/W, USEPA AND USTR

USEPA FOR OIA/THOMPSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [KSEP](#) [KPAO](#) [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: AIT 2005 EARTH DAY BEACH CLEAN-UP

REF: SECSTATE 73277

1. (U) Summary. Econ/ESTH, PAS and CLO along with the Taipei American School's (TAS) Key Club worked together to organize AIT's participation in a Taiwan government sponsored beach-clean up event in commemoration of Earth Day 2005. Thirty two people from the AIT community (including Americans, Foreign National Employees and family members) and 26 TAS students participated in the Jinshan beach clean-up on April 30, 2005. AIT DDIR delivered a speech at the event that was very well received by the government hosts and by the press (text of speech contained in para 2). The beach clean-up was jointly sponsored by Taiwan's Environmental Protection Agency, Taiwan's Coast Guard and the Taipei County Government to celebrate both Earth Day and Taiwan's "Year of the Sea," during which Taiwan hopes to raise public awareness of marine pollution and to increase protection of marine resources. In all, an estimated 3,000 people participated in the Jinshan beach clean-up. According to Taiwan's EPA, a total of 98 beach-clean ups were held throughout Taiwan on April 30 with a total of 40,000 volunteers participating.

2. DDIR Earth Day Speech presented at Jinshan Beach Clean-up, April 30, 2005:

Begin text

Taiwan EPA Minister Tsay Ting-kuei, Taipei County Vice Governor Chang Tzi-chin, Coast Guard Administration Minister Syu Huei-you and Jinshan Township Chief Yu Chung-yi, Taipei American School Key Club members and all other participants in today's event, Good Morning. On behalf of the American Institute in Taiwan, I am very pleased to join this beach cleanup and support your efforts to raise awareness of the problems of marine debris and help improve the local environment in which we all live.

This beach cleanup is both a highly appropriate commemoration of Earth Day and of Taiwan's increased attention to the environment since our two sides began cooperating on environmental programs in 1993. Much has changed in Taiwan over the past 12 years and the environmental improvements we have seen are prominent and welcome. Since I first studied in Taiwan in the 1970s, I can personally attest to the significant improvements in Taiwan's air quality.

I would also like to use this occasion to emphasize the importance that the United States places on the responsible use and stewardship of ocean and coastal resources. In December 2004, President Bush released the "U.S. Ocean Action Plan" that acknowledges the vital contributions that oceans make to our well-being. The U.S. Ocean Action Plan seeks to make U.S. coasts and lakes cleaner, healthier and more productive. In addition, the United States is pioneering techniques to crack down on illegal fishing worldwide. And we are leading efforts to prevent marine mammals, sharks, sea turtles, and seabirds from being unintentionally caught in fishing nets or accidentally hooked in longline fishing operations.

Finally, supporting your efforts today also presents an excellent opportunity for AIT to express the importance we place on continuing our cooperation to improve the environment both globally and locally.

Thank you for allowing us to be here and to help contribute to enhancing Taiwan's natural beauty.

End Text

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